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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/797,010	03/11/2004	Shigeru Inoue	107439-00108	3893

7590 11/17/2006

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EXAMINER
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VANAMAN, FRANK BENNETT

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3618

DATE MAILED: 11/17/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b> 10/797,010	<b>Applicant(s)</b> INOUE, SHIGERU	
	<b>Examiner</b> Frank Vanaman	<b>Art Unit</b> 3618	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

#### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 8/28/06.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-26 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 12-26 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \*    c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                       | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application                       |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

### **Status of Application**

1. Applicant's amendment, filed August 28, 2006, has been entered in the application. Claims 1-26 remain pending, claims 12-26 being withdrawn as directed to a non-elected invention.

### **Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112**

2. Claims 1-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. In claim 1, lines 8-14, the recitation sets forth a speed adjusting device which adjusts a vehicle speed to achieve a target speed independently of the operation of accelerator or brake pedals, and then further recites a target speed changing device which adjusts the target speed dependent upon the operation of the accelerator or brake pedal. The specification at page 3, line 19 through page 4, line 1 reiterates this condition in a summary statement having no greater detail than the claim recitation. The specification (see pages 20-22, for example) does not appear to further describe how such a function is carried out, inasmuch as the pedal controls do adjust the target speed, and the target speed is considered by the vehicle speed adjusting device (e.g., step S04), as such it appears as though the operation of the vehicle speed adjusting device is not independent of the operation of the pedal elements.

3. Claims 1-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. In claim 1, lines 8-14, the recitation of the vehicle speed adjusting device operating independently of the control pedals, controlling a vehicle speed in accordance with a target value, and the selection of a target value based on operation of the pedals appears contradictory, inasmuch as the pedals are used to adjust the target, which is used by the speed adjusting device.

4. As regards claims currently rejected under 35 USC §112, second paragraph, please note that rejections under 35 USC §102 and 103 should not be based upon

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considerable speculation as to the meaning of the terms employed and assumptions as to the scope of the claims when the claims are not definite. See *In re Steele* 305 F.2d 859, 862, 134 USPQ 292, 295 (CCPA 1962). When no reasonably definite meaning can be ascribed to certain terms in a claim, the subject matter does not become anticipated or obvious, but rather the claim becomes indefinite. See *In re Wilson* 424 F.2d 1382, 1385, 165 USPQ 494, 496 (CCPA 1970). As such the currently pending claims may be subject to prior art rejections not set forth herein upon the clarification of the claim language.

#### **Claims not Rejected over the Prior Art**

5. Claims 1-11 are not rejected as being unpatentable over or anticipated by the prior art, however they are not in condition for allowance at this time.
6. Claims 12-26 remain withdrawn from consideration.

#### **Response to comments**

7. Applicant's comments, filed with the amendment, have been carefully considered. Applicant's amplification of the operation of the device is appreciated, however these further comments do not appear to support applicant's position with respect to the rejection under 35 USC §112, First Paragraph. In the remarks at page 12, in regards to applicant's clarification of the operation of steps 41 and 42, applicant notes that the accelerator pedal constitutes an exemplary trigger for the allowance of the operation of the speed adjusting device. Such a relationship does not constitute independence from the operation of the exemplary control (in this case, the accelerator), rather the operation of the adjustment device is explicitly dependent on the operation of the pedal. As regards the rejection under 35 USC §112, Second Paragraph, applicant's comments (page 13 of the remarks) are not persuasive. As the claim recitation sets forth, the target speed changing device changes a target speed based on operation of the accelerator or brake pedal (claim 1, lines 12-14). The speed adjusting device adjusts the vehicle speed to achieve the target speed (claim 1, lines 9-11) - which speed, as explicitly recited, is set by operation of the pedals (claim 1, lines 12-14). As such, in that the target speed is set by the pedals, and the adjusting device

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utilizes the target speed, it is not at all clear how such a relationship can be claimed as independent.

### Conclusion

8. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

9. Any inquiry specifically concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to F. Vanaman whose telephone number is 571-272-6701.

Any inquiries of a general nature or relating to the status of this application may be made through either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

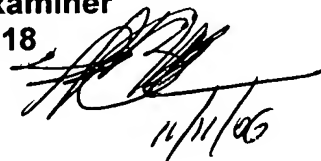
A response to this action should be mailed to:

Mail Stop \_\_\_\_\_  
Commissioner for Patents  
P. O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450,

Or faxed to:

PTO Central Fax: 571-273-8300

**F. VANAMAN**  
**Primary Examiner**  
**Art Unit 3618**



11/11/06